

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-26. (Cancelled).

27. (Withdrawn) An expression system as claimed in claims 39, 40 or 41, wherein the plant characteristic produced by said inserted gene can be used to prevent the production of seeds capable of developing into mature plants.

28-38. (Cancelled).

39. (Previously presented) An expression system functional in a plant comprising:
- (a) an inducible promoter sequence responsive to the presence or absence of an exogenous chemical inducer;
 - (b) a DNA sequence encoding a repressor protein under control of said inducible promoter;
 - (c) a plant developmental gene promoter sequence activated at a predetermined stage of plant development, which includes an operator sequence recognized by said repressor protein, the presence of which inactivates said plant developmental gene promoter; and
 - (d) a DNA sequence encoding a recombinase that functions as a disrupter of a plant characteristic produced by an inserted gene, the DNA sequence encoding the recombinase being under the control of said plant developmental gene promoter sequence so that upon expression of said recombinase, a nucleotide sequence flanked by recombinase recognition sequences is excised,

wherein the DNA sequence encoding a recombinase is the *FLP* gene of the 2 micron plasmid of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* and the recognition sequences are the FRT sequences which flank all or part of the inserted gene or its regulatory elements, wherein the inserted gene is a gene encoding a predetermined characteristic introduced into the plant by a recombinant DNA method, and

wherein the presence or absence of the exogenous chemical inducer controls whether said characteristic is displayed in the plant.

40-42. (Cancelled).

43. (Previously presented) An expression system as claimed in claim 39, wherein said inducible promoter comprises the promoter of *AlcA* gene from *Aspergillus*.

44-45. (Cancelled).

46. (Withdrawn and cancelled).

47-75 (Cancelled).

76. (Withdrawn) A method for controlling whether a characteristic is displayed in a plant, said method comprising:

transforming the plant with an expression system functional in a plant and comprising:

- (a) an inducible promoter sequence responsive to the presence or absence of an exogenous chemical inducer;
- (b) either
 - (i) a gene encoding a repressor protein under control of said inducible promoter; or
 - (ii) a gene encoding an inhibitor of the recombinase specified at (d) below under control of said inducible promoter;
- (c) a plant developmental gene promoter sequence activated at a predetermined stage of plant development, which, in the case of (b)(i) above, includes an operator sequence recognized by said repressor protein, the presence of which inactivates said plant developmental gene promoter; and
- (d) a gene encoding a recombinase that functions as a disrupter of a plant characteristic produced by an inserted gene, the gene encoding the recombinase

being under the control of said plant developmental gene promoter sequence, and the recombinase being adapted to excise a nucleotide sequence flanked by recombinase recognition sequences,

wherein the inserted gene is a gene encoding a predetermined characteristic introduced into the plant by a recombinant DNA method, and

wherein the presence or absence of the exogenous chemical inducer controls whether said characteristic is displayed in the plant.

77. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 76, wherein the recombinase gene is the *FLP* gene of the 2 micron plasmid of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* and the recognition sequences are the FRT sequences which flank all or part of the inserted gene or its regulatory elements.

78. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 76, wherein the recombinase gene is the *Cre* gene of bacteriophage P1 and its recognition sequence or the *lox* sequences which flank all or part of the inserted gene or its regulatory elements.

79. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 76, wherein the recombinase gene is the *Activator* transposase of *Zea mays*.

80. (Withdrawn) A method according to any one of claims 76, 77, 78 or 79, wherein said inducible promoter comprises the promoter of the *AlcA* gene, the system further comprising a gene capable of expressing the *AlcR* protein, *alcA* and *alcR* being obtainable from *Aspergillus*.

81. (Withdrawn) A method according to any one of claims 76, 77, 78 or 79, wherein the inducible promoter is the promoter of the gene encoding the 27kDa protein of glutathione-S-transferase II.

82. (Withdrawn) A method according to any one of claims 76, 77, 78 or 79, wherein said inducible promoter sequence is functionally linked to and controls a repressor protein gene and in which the disrupter gene promoter includes an operator sequence recognized by said repressor

protein, so that in the presence of the inducer the repressor protein is produced which interacts with the operator sequence disabling the plant developmental promoter and inhibiting expression of the disrupter gene.

83. (Withdrawn) A method according to any one of claims 76, 77, 78 or 79, wherein said expression system comprises a repressor protein gene, wherein said repressor protein gene encodes the *lac* repressor or a repressor used by 434, P22 or lambdabacteriophages.

84. (Withdrawn) A method according to any one of claims 76, 77, 78 or 79, wherein said expression system comprises a repressor protein gene, wherein the repressor protein gene encoded by said repressor protein gene is the *tet* repressor.

85. (Withdrawn) A method according to any one of claims 76, 77, 78 or 79, wherein said plant developmental gene sequence is a promoter selected from the group consisting of malate synthase genes, germin genes, glyoxysomal enzyme genes, aleurone layer genes and carboxypeptidase genes.

86. (Withdrawn) A method according to any one of claims 76, 77, 78 or 79, wherein the plant characteristic produced by said produced by said inserted gene can be used to prevent the production of seeds capable of developing into mature plants.

87. (Withdrawn) An isolated plant genome wherein a characteristic displayed in the plant from which said plant genome was isolated, is controlled by a method according to any one of claims 76, 77, 78 or 79.

88. (Withdrawn) An isolated plant wherein a characteristic displayed in the plant is controlled by a method according to any one of claims 76, 77, 78 or 79.

89. (Withdrawn) An isolated plant part, wherein a characteristic displayed in the plant from which the plant part was isolated, is controlled by a method according to any one of claims 76, 77, 78 or 79.

90. (Withdrawn) An isolated plant cell wherein a characteristic displayed in the plant from which the plant cell was isolated, is controlled by a method according to any one of claims 76, 77, 78 or 79.

91. (Withdrawn) A plant seed wherein a characteristic displayed in the plant which is grown from said seed is controlled by a method according to any one of claims 76, 77, 78 or 79.

92. (Withdrawn) An expression system functional in a plant comprising:

- a) an inducible promoter sequence responsive to the presence or absence of an exogenous chemical inducer;
- b) a DNA sequence encoding an inhibitor of the recombinase specified at (d) below under control of said inducible promoter;
- c) a plant development gene promoter sequence activated at a predetermined stage of plant development; and
- d) a DNA sequence encoding a recombinase that functions as a disrupter of a plant characteristic produced by an inserted gene, the DNA sequence encoding the recombinase being under the control of said plant development gene promoter sequence so that upon expression of said recombinase, a nucleotide sequence flanked by recombinase recognition sequences is excised;

wherein the DNA sequence encoding a recombinase is the FLP gene of the 2 micron plasmid of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* and the recognition sequences are the FRT sequences which flank all or part of the inserted gene or its regulatory elements, wherein the inserted gene is a gene encoding a predetermined characteristic introduced into the plant by a recombinant DNA method, and

wherein the presence or absence of the exogenous chemical inducer controls whether said characteristic is displayed in the plant.

93. (Previously presented) The expression system of claim 43, wherein said expression system further comprises a gene capable of expressing the AlcR protein from *Aspergillus*.